

# CityCollegeNews

A newsletter for staff, faculty and alumni of George Brown College

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## The Welcome Back issue

We hope you enjoyed your summer and are ready for another exciting school year at the College.

Many changes and new initiatives will be taking place this year including the newsletter you are now reading.

Thanks to those who responded to the City College News Readership Survey. Your feedback and suggestions are greatly appreciated. As promised, the results of the survey have been made available for you to read at <http://insite>

Because the newsletter is for so many different readers — support staff, faculty, administration and retirees — it has a lot to cover if it is going to effectively meet the needs of its readership. Several changes will be made and new features will be added to City College

News this year in an effort to better serve each group in a fair and equitable way.

Here is what you will see going forward:

- An editorial policy has been developed and is posted online for the College community to refer to. Submission guidelines can be found in the policy.
- Two new columns have been established to ensure that every division and department is featured in the newsletter. The first will explain the role of each division or department within the College. The second will give each area a chance to feature something they want the College to know about.
- College staff can nominate colleagues in support, academic, and administration, who they feel deserve a profile in the newsletter for their exemplary work and use of best

practices. Criteria and submission process are posted on Insite.

- A section is now dedicated to opinion pieces and questions that staff might have about issues related to education and the College. Submission guidelines and procedures are on Insite.
- A Q&A with the President will be a regular feature of the newsletter. Ask questions related to the Academic Strategy, the Business Plan, or anything else relevant to your work at the College.

More changes and further detail can be found on the Intranet site. If you have questions, concerns, or feedback, please contact Carolyn Wong at ext. 4476.

We hope you enjoy the new and improved CCN

## 2005 kicked off with big breakfast

The College that eats together, sticks together.

Which is why on Aug. 29, all full-time George Brown College employees were invited to attend the second annual President's Breakfast at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Unlike last year's event, held at Casa Loma campus, more than 700 employees were able to eat breakfast together in one sitting.

The purpose of the event was to reflect on the past year's accomplishments, talk about this year's goals and priorities, and reflect on our creativity as individuals and as a team.

Many people also took the opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues they hadn't seen in a while and meet staff who are new to the College.

The theme of the breakfast was "Creativity and Knowledge." Environments pollster and author Michael Adams covered the knowledge portion of the program with an interesting, engaging, and informative presentation on how Canadians differ from their neighbours to the south.

The newly formed George Brown College choir took care of the creativity portion of the event with such hits as "Downtown at George Brown."



GBC President Anne Sado addresses a crowd of more than 700 full-time employees at the annual kick-off breakfast on August 29.

GBC President Anne Sado recapped success stories as the building of the Academic Strategy, the improvement in KPI scores, the opening of the new student service centres at St. James and Casa Loma, the expansion of unique classroom experiences with the Yorkville School of Makeup and Esthetics and the Young Centre for the Performing Arts, and the continuation of college-wide events

such as Tech in the City, Health in the City, Ready, Set, Cook, and Win, Peace of Cake, and the United Way campaign.

Looking to the future, Sado talked about the new Business Plan and how it will help us connect our strategic goals and priorities to operational activities. Making connections with our students and employees, improving

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## Kudos to 2005 Crystal Apple nominees

It's time for George Brown College students to express their appreciation for their professors! This year, more than 100 students took the time to write essays about how their full-time teachers challenge, motivate and inspire them in their learning.

This year marks the fifth annual Crystal Apple Awards — a student-nominated recognition program. Students must submit a nomination letter describing the teacher(s) who have made a difference in their learning experience. An independent panel from OISE/UT evaluates the nominations and makes their selection based on the students' input.

So here they are, the 2005 Crystal Apple Award nominees:

Phyllis Beaton-Vazquez	Kay Kaszuba
Diane Bergeron	Suzanne Kavanagh
Alan Brown	Corene Kennedy
Julie Bulmash	Rachel Langford
Shari Cherny	Doug Laporte
Georgie Clarke	Dennis Lawson
Khalid Danok	Anne McKenzie-Rivers
Doug Darrah	Susan McAuley
Karen dePrinse	Jamie McIntyre
Rod Donne	Cindy McNairn
Heather Donovan	Jorge Olenewa
Adel Esayed	Akber Remu
Peter Felder	Richard Sash
Dave Fleming	Lara Sauer
Brian Floody	John R. Varga
Mary Gazel	James Voulakos
Mary Gibbons	Ingrid Wagemans
Rosalind Gilbert	Diane Wardrope
Angie Gorassi	Connie Winder
Ian Grady	Lorraine Wright
Jeri Johnston	

Congratulations to all of them

"The Crystal Apple Awards give students an opportunity to recognize teachers who have made a difference in their learning experience," says Ann Smiley, President of George Brown College Foundation. "In the past five years more than 700 students have participated in the program. That speaks volumes for the inspirational teaching that students find here at George Brown."

On Sept. 28, the College community will come together to celebrate all of the nominees and for the announcement of the winning student essays. For more details on the Crystal Apple Awards, contact Cathy Callaghan in the GBC Foundation (416) 415-5000, ext. 2063.

## GBC prof shares stories from the UAE

For the past two years, Gillian Johnston, a professor in the Career and Work Counselling program at George Brown has been working at Sharjah Women's College in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), helping to establish a similar program. Johnston, considered an expert in the field of career counselling, recently won the International Career Development Professional of the Year Award.

This summer, Johnston returned to George Brown to share her experience with students, colleagues, and the career counselling community. Student Nicole McKenzie shares her thoughts on Johnston's visit:

An evening with career development educator, Gillian Johnston is not only inspiring but an eye-opening occasion to remember.

On June 28, Johnston graciously shared her extraordinary professional and personal life experiences as a career counselling educator in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with the College community.

Due to economic shifts in the UAE labour market, there is a need for career counsellors to support individuals with their employability and work issues. Johnston chose to share her wealth of knowledge with Sharjah Women's College where she teaches Career and Work Counselling.

During her presentation, she shared insights with the audience about the cultural differences between Canada and the UAE, and

the fact that the notion of career counselling is quite unique in the UAE. There is no word for "counselling" in Arabic languages so there is no history to uncover. But thanks to Johnston's dedication and leadership, career counselling in the UAE is no longer a foreign practice.

Johnston spoke fondly of her students and their strong motivation to strive for higher education. She also shared their learning experiences through the use of video technology. It was a thought-provoking way to demonstrate how graduates of career counselling programs worldwide can at times relate to each other regardless of cultural differences.

Many of her students expressed that the learning environment she has created for them is a place of safety where one is given the opportunity to speak freely and candidly about feelings, dreams and wishes. Sometimes, we take this type of freedom for granted in Canada.

"Don't be afraid to dream," Johnston said. "All things start out with a dream and if opportunity comes, consider it. Be conscious of your dreams and be ready to reinvent yourself."

On behalf of George Brown College's Career and Work Counsellor Alumni Chapter, we would like to extend our thanks to Gillian Johnston for sharing her professional knowledge, insights, and learning experiences.

## President's Breakfast

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processes, and meeting financial goals are the foundations of the Business Plan.

Condensed versions of the Business Plan and the Academic Strategy were provided to

all attendees in a creative and functional way. Full versions of these two documents can be found on Insite as well as Sado's speech.

### What you thought about the second annual President's Breakfast:

"I think the breakfast is a great opportunity for employees of the College to start the academic year feeling invigorated and inspired. The President's speech about connection was valuable because it reinforced the fact that many of the successes I've had teaching at the College have come from collaborating with other college employees to enhance my students' learning experience. For example, I've invited staff from Marketing, Human Resources, and the Foundation/Alumni Affairs to be guests in one of my courses."

Richard Almonte, faculty, Business and Creative Arts

"I like the way three presidents of the union and the association were introduced. It shows how classy Anne is and respects these people as part of her team. This meeting also brought the staff up-to-date as to what the plan is for the upcoming year. Congratulations to Anne and the staff for putting such an effective meeting together."

Reza Davoodi, faculty, Hospitality

"I found the President's Breakfast very informative. Mr. Adams kept his large audience totally engaged in his speech — great sense of humour too. Excellent choice of speaker. Congratulations to Anne and her team."

Hercilia C. Medeiros, assistant to the Dean, Hospitality

## Theatre grad enjoys success at Shaw

With the Theatre School's recent move to the Distillery District, City College News met with actor Ben Carlson, a Theatre School grad, to talk about life after George Brown and the opening of the Young Centre for the Performing Arts.

Even after 11 seasons at the Shaw Festival, actor Ben Carlson still gets nervous before a performance.

So what does he do to dispel the butterflies? A warm-up that he learned while studying at George Brown College more than a decade ago.

Carlson, who graduated in 1993, currently plays Adolphus in Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara* onstage at the Shaw Festival Theatre until October 29.

The 35-year-old Toronto-native has built a solid reputation after receiving rave reviews for his portrayal of Jack Tanner in *Man and Superman* and winning a Dora Award for his performance as Torvald Helmer in a new adaptation of Ibsen's *The Doll House* by John Murrell.

"Reading a good review is wonderful affirmation but you can't take it too seriously because if you believe the good, you also have to believe the bad," said Carlson on how he handles his rising star. "You have to find

the affirmation within yourself that you are doing well. I'm not sure how you do that but I guess you just keep working."

Despite his parents' warnings (both are actors) about the pitfalls of choosing this career path, Carlson left McGill University where he was studying classical music and jazz to train in theatre at George Brown in 1990.

Even before completing the three-year program, much to his parents' — and his own — relief, Carlson was working steadily, avoiding the starving artist cliché altogether.

"It's very important to get good training and I did at George Brown," said Carlson. "Talent and luck may work sometimes but good training and a good work ethic will always get you places."

He credits George Brown's program for providing practical training, a positive learning environment, and strong connections to the theatre community.

Carlson said he believes the partnership with Soulpepper Theatre will only strengthen the Theatre School's already outstanding reputation in the industry. The opportunity to learn and perform in the same environment as working theatre professionals is something



that Carlson would have been very excited about had it happened during his time at George Brown.

The Young Centre for the Performing Arts opened its doors on the first day of school to more than 120 theatre students. College staff, faculty, and admin can check out the new building at the Distillery which is a short walk from the St. James campus. The Theatre School's 2005-06 season begins in November. For more information, go to [www.georgebrown.ca/theatre/productions.aspx](http://www.georgebrown.ca/theatre/productions.aspx)

## Group effort makes Orientation better

Some significant changes have been made to Orientation this year thanks to the wonders of college-wide teamwork.

While individual program areas are still responsible for conducting their own Orientation activities, the Academic Leaders group decided it was time to take a more coordinated approach to organizing it, says Wayne Poirier, Director of Student Service and Campus Life.

An Orientation committee was formed with representatives from across the College to share information and best practices. The idea was to create a more consistent experience for new students that could still be customized to each area of study. Here's how things are a little different this year:

- The committee scheduled individual Orientation sessions in such a way that large groups of students would not be trying to access services at the same time.
- A common look was established on all Orientation materials and signage with a logo designed by Johanna Chaytor, a George Brown student.
- The new Orientation slogan, which can be found on all the materials is "George Brown College — We care about your Success."

- An Orientation CD was created to help students navigate the George Brown website specifically for their needs as brand new students. Special features include a Getting Started Checklist, Social and Intellectual Environment, and Key Contacts. As a prototype, only 4,000 copies were produced this year but if it proves to be successful, the CD will be rolled out across the College. It is online at [www.georgebrown.ca/orientation/index.aspx](http://www.georgebrown.ca/orientation/index.aspx)

- A standardized evaluation form has been developed and will be used across the College during the second week of classes. The data will be shared and benchmarked for future evaluations.
- A list of activities geared towards raising awareness of disability issues and services was provided to the program areas and a bookmark featuring key points of information is available to students.
- A final report with recommendations for future Orientation activities will be delivered by the committee.

"All the research shows that what happens during Orientation and the first six weeks of the school year is the most important factor to student retention," says Poirier. "We need to

make a real connection with the students and make them feel like part of a community."

Human Resources Management grad Amy Saini couldn't agree more. Looking back on her Orientation last year, Saini found it was helpful but wished more students were encouraged to attend.

"At the postgraduate level, many students have been through the school system before, therefore they may think that attending Orientation is unnecessary," says Saini. "A personal touch may help them see that Orientation is more than just figuring out your way around the College. It is building a sense of community with others before the dynamics of a classroom set in."

While there is still room to grow and improve for the September, January, and May intakes, Poirier says the changes made to this year's Orientation activities and processes are a step in the right direction to creating the best first impression of the College to new students.



## New captioning policy gives equal access to success for all students

This fall, the College is implementing a new policy on captioned media and e-text in response to the province's new *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

The policy aims to reduce or remove barriers for students who require special accommodation in the classroom, such as Deaf, hard-of-hearing or blind students, as well as those with learning disabilities. The objective is to provide equal access to education and foster academic success, said Anne Villahermosa, Educational Resources' newly appointed Co-ordinator, Accessible Media.

Captioned media, which is the visual display of the spoken word on screen, and e-text, which are electronic files that can be used in audio, large print, or Braille formats, are tools used to assist students in fully participating in the educational, social, and cultural aspects of student life.

The long-term goal of the policy is for faculty to show captioned videos and provide instructional materials in electronic format. The College will only purchase educational materials that are either available in an accessible format or for which permission is given to convert to alternative formats.

Educational Resources is leading the implementation of the policy and Villahermosa will begin meeting with faculty this month to discuss the initiative, and provide training and support.

For more information about the new policy, please contact Anne Villahermosa at (416) 415-5000, ext. 2782 or avillah@gbrownc.on.ca

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**When:** September 28

**What:** Crystal Apple Awards reception

**Where:** Siegfried's

**Who:** contact Cathy Callaghan at ext. 2063 for more details

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**When:** October 26, all day

**What:** World Mental Health Day — an educational forum focused on "Immigrants and Mental Health"

**Where:** George Brown College, Centre for Financial Services

**Who:** contact Sheila Mavor Moore at ext. 4141 for more details

## AROUND GEORGE BROWN

Here's a quick look at what happened at George Brown this summer

■ On May 18, the **Access Centre of Excellence** celebrated its third birthday with the Access Academy Awards. A very unique and entertaining video was created to commemorate the anniversary, highlight the department's accomplishments, and pay tribute to everyone who works in Access.

■ On June 30, the **Activation Co-ordinator/ Gerontology program** signed an articulation agreement with Laurentian University's Gerontology degree program. The agreement will provide George Brown graduates with the opportunity to complete Laurentian's degree program in one year rather than three. George Brown is working on offering a reciprocal opportunity to Gerontology graduates from Laurentian.



Anne Sado, GBC President, and Brian Aiken, director of Gerontology at Laurentian University, finalize the articulation agreement between the college's Activation Co-ordinator/ Gerontology diploma program and the university's Gerontology degree program.

■ On July 14, the **Culinary Management Diploma Integrated program** celebrated its official launch with a breakfast event at Siegfried's. The students prepared a delicious

breakfast of crepes and fresh fruit for industry guests, and members of the College community. Industry attendees included Daniel Claret from Daniel et Daniel, Todd Clarmo from Oliver Bonacini, Lynn Crawford from the Four Seasons, and Donna Doohar from Mildred Pierce. The event provided a great schmoozing opportunity for the students of this new and innovative program.



Philip You (right), a student in the Culinary Management Diploma Integrated program, chats with Todd Clarmo, executive chef with Oliver Bonacini restaurants.

■ From August 3 to 10, the **Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism** welcomed Chef Giuseppe Maffioli from Italy who put on a great demonstration for the Italian Culinary Arts students. More details and photos can be viewed at [www.georgebrown.ca/News/Giuseppe\\_Maffioli\\_visit.aspx](http://www.georgebrown.ca/News/Giuseppe_Maffioli_visit.aspx)

■ On August 9, the **Assistant Cook Extended Training (ACET) program** held an appreciation event for all the employers who support the program as well as members of the College. The students prepared delicious appetizers and were hit with a huge lunchtime crowd in the Centre for Hospitality and Tourism.

(Photo below) After a long day of cooking and cleaning, the ACET group takes a breather.

